



Harmful Algal Bloom Confirmed at Areas of Big Bear Lake Users Advised to Avoid Water Contact

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE	Marisa Van Dyke	(916) 322-8431
Aug. 23, 2019	Barbara Barry	(951) 248-0375

SACRAMENTO – The State Water Resources Control Board and Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board are urging boaters, recreational water users, and dog owners to avoid direct water contact while visiting areas of Big Bear Lake due to a harmful algal bloom (HAB).

The areas impacted by the bloom include North Shore Drive, extending about 0.5 miles west of the Big Bear Solar Observatory, and the west side of Stanfield Cutoff. Toxins produced by HABs were detected in the water near the shore. These toxins can make people ill and be fatal to animals.

A popular fishing destination, Big Bear Lake is in San Bernardino County off Highway 19 and surrounded by the San Bernardino National Forest. Visit the [State Water Board Twitter page](#) to see a map and pictures of the cyanobacteria bloom.

The recommendation is for people and their dogs to stay out of the water and avoid contact with floating algal material and scum in the water or along the shore. Fish caught near the impacted areas should not be consumed until further notice. This advisory is based on the potential health risks posed by the algal organisms, known as cyanobacteria, and the level of toxins measured in water samples collected in mid-August. In this instance, the HAB appears in different shades of green and is found near the water surface or floating, sometimes resembling spilled paint.

As the bloom continues to grow, cyanobacteria may form thick algal mats or scum on the water surface and accumulate on the shore. Bloom conditions can change rapidly as the flow of surface water and wind may mix, move, or concentrate the bloom into different areas of the lake. The conditions are being monitored by the Santa Ana Regional Board and partner organizations. Users will be informed when the bloom dissipates.

The State Water Board and the nine Regional Water Boards (known as the Water Boards), in partnership with other programs and agencies, are actively supporting and coordinating a statewide HAB incident response and providing publicly available resources. In 2018, the Water Boards received 190 voluntary reports of HABs from across the state. To learn how to stay safe around HABs, report a bloom and more, visit the CA HABs Portal: <http://www.mywaterquality.ca.gov/habs/>

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